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Oration "Tua verba" of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (21 May 1454, Regensburg). 3rd version. (Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II; 78)

Michael Von Cotta-Schönberg

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(Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II; 78)

Oration "*Tua verba*" of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (21 May 1454, Regensburg). Translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg

3rd version

2019

Abstract

The fall of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, to the Ottoman Turks in May 1453 created widespread and justified fear in Europe. It might reasonably be assumed that the young Turkish sultan, Mehmed II, would pursue his war of expansion and move further into European territories. The two international institutions of Europe, the Holy Roman Empire and the papacy, were compelled to react, although both incumbents, Emperor Friedrich III and Pope Nicolaus V, were peaceful men, averse to risk taking. After some procrastination, the emperor convened a conference of the European rulers and German princes in the city of Regensburg in May 1454. The driving force at this meeting was his counsellor and senior diplomat, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena. Piccolomini gave both the opening speech, the "*Quamvis omnibus*" and the closing speech, the "*Tua verba*" at the diet. In the last one, he especially and profusely thanked the major princes present or represented at the diet, Margrave Albrecht Achilles of Brandenburg, the Duke of Burgundy, the King of Poland, the papal legate, and the Duke of Savoy.

Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Æneas Silvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Renaissance orations; Renaissance oratory; Renaissance rhetorics; 15th century; 1459; Crusades against the Turks; Germany; Holy Roman Empire; Kaiser Friedrich III (Habsburg); Emperor Frederick III (Habsburg); Duke Philippe III the Good of Burgundy; Duc Philippe III le Bon de Bourgogne; King Casimir IV of Poland; Giovanni di Castiglione; Diet of Regensburg, 1459; Reichstag in Regensburg 1459

Translator

Michael v. Cotta-Schönberg

Mag. Art. (University of Copenhagen)
Bachelier en Philosophie (Université de Louvain)
Emeritus Deputy Director / The Royal Library, Copenhagen
Emeritus University Librarian / University of Copenhagen

ORCID identity: 000-0001-8499-4142

e-mail: typsita@gmail.com

Foreword

In 2007, I undertook a project of publishing the Latin texts with English translations of the orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II. Altogether 80¹ orations (including papal responses to ambassadorial addresses) are extant today, though more may still be held, unrecognized, in libraries and archives.

At a later stage the project was expanded to include ambassadors' orations to the pope, of which about 40 are presently known.

I do not, actually, plan to publish further versions of the present volume, but I do reserve the option in case I – during my future studies - come across other manuscripts containing interesting versions of the oration or if important new research data on the subject matter are published, making it appropriate to modify or expand the present text. It will therefore always be useful to check if a later version than the one the reader may have previously found via the Internet is available.

I shall much appreciate to be notified by readers who discover errors and problems in the text and translation or unrecognized quotations.

12 September 2019

MCS

¹ 81 orations, if the "*Cum animadverto*" is counted as a Piccolomini-oration, see oration "*Quam laetus*" [18], Appendix

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II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context¹

The fall of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire, to the Ottoman Turks in May 1453 created widespread and justified fear in Europe. It might reasonably be assumed that the young Turkish sultan, Mehmed II, would pursue his war of expansion and move further into European territories. The two international institutions of Europe, the Holy Roman Empire and the papacy, were compelled to react, although both incumbents, Emperor Friedrich III and Pope Nicolaus V, were peaceful men, averse to risk taking. After some procrastination, the emperor convened a conference of the European rulers and German princes in the city of Regensburg in May 1454. The driving force at this meeting was his counsellor and senior diplomat, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena. Piccolomini gave both the opening speech, the "*Quamvis omnibus*" [21] and the closing speech, the "*Tua verba*" at the diet.

The participants in the diet accepted the proposals of the imperial ambassadors for a German crusade to be made against the Turks, but its practical organization was left to a later diet.

According to Piccolomini himself, the diet did generate some enthusiasm among the Germans for the crusade venture, soon to disappear, however.

2. Themes

The theme of the closing was simply and naturally one of thanks to the major participant princes present or represented at the diet, Margrave Albrecht Achilles of Brandenburg, the Duke of Burgundy, the King of Poland, the papal legate, and the Duke of Savoy.

3. Date, place, audience, and format

The date of the delivery was 21 May 1454.

The venue the town hall in Regensburg, used for the diet.

The audience consisted of the participants in the conference of European and German princes, summoned by the emperor to deliberate on a European military response to the Turkish conquest of Constantinople and the destruction of the Byzantine Empire.

The format was a diplomatic and political oration held on behalf of the emperor.

¹ The introduction to the oration "*Quamvis omnibus*" [21]

4. Text

The oration is included in Piccolomini's ambassadorial report to the emperor on the proceedings of the diet, the *Historia de dieta Ratisponensi*. It does not appear to have been transmitted individually, and is presently only known to be extant in the manuscripts containing the *Historia*.

Though Piccolomini himself says, in the *Historia*, that the oration was improvised ("ex tempore"), he had probably foreseen that he would be the one to deliver the closing oration at the diet and had prepared himself accordingly. The final text, as part of the *Historia*, was undoubtedly reworked for inclusion into the *Historia*, but probably only in style, putting on the final touches, and not in substance as it only contained formal thanks.

4.1. Manuscripts

The *Historia* is extant in a number of manuscripts in European libraries.

4.2. Editions

As part of the report, the oration has been edited, among others by:

- *Pius II: Orationes*. Ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca, 1755-1759 / vol. III, pp. 81-83
[Mansi does not indicate on which manuscript his edition is based]
- *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Hrsg. Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918 / vol. III, pp. 560-563
[Based on Mansi's text]

4.3. Present edition

For principles of edition (incl. orthography) and translation, see *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, ch. 9-10.

The text is taken from Wolkan's edition.

The pagination is from Wolkan's edition.

5. Sources

Only two direct or indirect quotations have been identified in this oration, both from classical sources, one from Cicero (*Pro Marcello*) and one from Virgil (*Aeneid*).

6. Bibliography

Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Epistolae*:

- *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Hrsg. Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918

Pius II: *Orationes*. [1436-1464]

- Pius II: *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae*. Ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca: Benedini, 1755-1759
- *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 12 vols. 2019-2020

II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

{560} ... legati Caesaris in penitiori cubiculo se retrahentes, episcopo Senensi committunt, nonnulla ex tempore, quasi pro fine concilii dicat Philippumque duces commendat. quibus in contionem reversis, idem episcopus in hunc modum profatus est:

[1] Tua verba, marchio illustris, que unus pro omnibus fecisti, non sine voluptate accepimus, quando ex his cognoscimus imperatorie serenitatis propositum de tuenda Christianitate gratum atque acceptum esse. que veluti consulendo dixisti, referemus immutilata cesareo culmini. nec dubium nos habet, quin futuro in consilio caesar assit, facultas ei modo fuerit veniendi; nam hoc est, quod sibi pre ceteris rebus cordi est. vos modo operam date, ne quid impedimenti tantis rebus injiciatur.

[2] te autem Philippe, dux inclite ac magnanime, et ut te nomine tuo compellem, nostri gloria seculi, qui longo itinere non sine gravi sumtu ac labore, dimisso in discrimine regno tuo, jussioni cesaris paruisti, ad consulendum ecclesie catholice huc profectus, teque liberaliter et supra modum obtulisti magnifice, quibus commendemus verbis non satis in promptu est. licebit tamen pre gaudio exclamando dicere: o cor tuum, nobilissimo sanguine tuo nobilius! o principem laudibus immortalibus efferendum! o Christiane gentis unicum jubar lucemque mirificam! o patris optimi meliorem prolem! quibus te nunc preconiiis efferemus? nunquam ita magnifice quicquam de te dixerimus, id virtus quin superet {561} tua. tu profecto ita te hodie gessisti, ut in primis celesti regi, deinde terreno imperatori, postremo omnibus Christianis de te ipso copiose abundeque satisfeceris. possumque ego de te illud proferre, quod in Julium Cesarem promittit Cicero: nulla enim unquam etas de tuis laudibus conticescet. *[cont.]*

... The legates of the emperor¹ withdrew to a private chamber, where they agreed to charge the Bishop of Siena² with giving an improvised address at the closing of the diet, and to compliment Duke Philippe.³ So, when they returned to the assembly, the aforesaid bishop addressed the assembly in this way:

[1] The words, illustrious Margrave,⁴ you spoke on behalf of all We have heard with pleasure, since they make it clear that His Imperial Serenity's proposals⁵ for the protection of Christianity are welcome and accepted [by the assembly]. The advice you gave we shall pass on to His Imperial Highness unchanged, and we do not doubt that the emperor will attend the next diet,⁶ if at all possible, for this matter is extremely important to him. And on your part, you should all take care that there be no impediment to this great cause.

[2] And you Philippe, illustrious and magnanimous Duke and – to use an appropriate title – the glory of our age, you have obeyed the summons of the emperor and come here, on a long journey, at great cost and effort, and with risk to your own realm, in order to assist the Catholic Church, and you have made generous and magnificent offers [to the cause]: it is not easy to find words to praise you adequately. But we may indeed cry out for joy: oh, heart of yours, even more noble than your most noble blood! Oh, prince, worthy of immortal praise! Oh, unique glory and wonderful light of the Christian people! Oh son, surpassing a most excellent father! How can we praise you now? Your courage and strength surpass everything we can say about you. Today you have truly acted in a way which marvelously satisfies firstly the king in Heaven, then the emperor on Earth, and finally all Christians. I can say about you what Cicero⁷ declared about Julius Caesar⁸: *nor shall any future age fail to make mention of your praise.*⁹ [cont.]

¹ Emperor Friedrich III (Habsburg) (1415-1493): Duke of Austria (Styria). Elected emperor in 1440, crowned emperor in 1452

² Enea Silvio Piccolomini himself

³ Philippe III le Bon (1396-1467): Duke of Burgundy from 1419 to his death

⁴ Albrecht III Achilles of Brandenburg (1414-1486): Margrave, from 1471 Prince elector

⁵ The formal decisions of the conference, drawn up by Piccolomini

⁶ The diet planned for October in Frankfurt. The emperor did not participate

⁷ Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BCE): Roman statesman, orator and author

⁸ Caesar, Gajus Julius (100-44 BCE): Roman general and statesman

⁹ Cicero: *Pro Marcello*, 3.9: *nec ulla umquam etas de tuis laudibus conticescet*

[2 cont.] implesti hodie cunctorum, qui adsunt, desiderium mentesque omnium erexisti spemque nobis ingentem prebuiisti rerum optime gerendarum, quando te maximum inter principes nostri orbis jam natu grandiore belli labores sponte suscepturum pro nostra religione videmus. nam quid alii faciant, quando te talem tantumque ducem lorica indutum aspexerint et fulgentibus armis? Conduplicasti hodie, quod volebamus; nanque cum satis esse diceremus te belli participem obtinere, ductorem excitatoremque reliquorum te comperimus. ingens est hec tua laus, eternum hoc tibi decus comparasti, qui cum esses ultimus inter Christianos, cui Turchorum gladius extimescendus existat, primus tamen omnium prodis contra Turchos arma suscepturus. Et quis erit, obsecro, adeo irreligiosus Christianus, adeo iners, adeo communis boni negligens, qui tuo exemplo non moveatur? nos quidem tua promissa tuaque facta divo cesari exponemus, quem tanto magis gavisurum certissimi sumus, quanto promissiones tue et acta tua, quasque de te spes habuimus, exsuperare videmus. nunc virgilianum illud in te dicere possumus:

*in freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbre
lustrabunt, convexa polus dum sidera pascet,
semper honos nomenque tum laudesque manebunt.*

[2 cont.] Today, you have fulfilled the wish of all who are present, you have encouraged all, and you have given them great hopes for the coming venture, since we see that you, the greatest among the princes of this world freely undertake the hardships of war for our religion, even if you are now of advanced age.¹ What, indeed, will others do when they see a great duke like you, coated in mail and with shining arms. Today you have fulfilled our expectations twofold, for when we said that it was enough if you just took part in the war, we have heard that you will even lead and arouse others too. Immense will be your praise, and eternal will be the glory you acquire for yourself, since you who are the last of the Christians who must fear the sword of the Turks is the first of all to take up arms against the Turk. And what Christian - I ask - will be so impious, so sluggish, so indifferent to the common good, that he will not be moved by your example. We shall certainly relate your promises and deeds to the Holy Emperor: we are sure that he will be overjoyed at how greatly we see them surpass the expectations we had of you. Now we can apply those words of Virgil² to you:

*While rivers run to ocean,
while on the mountains shadows move over slopes,
while heaven feeds the stars,
ever shall your honour, your name, and your praises abide.*³

¹ The duke may not have appreciated Piccolomini's remark on his advanced age. Piccolomini, however, applied the figure to himself as pope, in his orations on the Congress of Mantua

² Vergilius Maro, Publius (70-19 BC): Roman poet

³ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 1.607-609

[3] ad te nunc venio, magne parens ecclesiae Papiensis, quem prima sedes huc legatum misit. gratissima fuit tua presentia in hoc loco, ad res bene gerendas eloquentia ac prudentia tua singularis adjumento non parvo fuit. agimus ingentes gratias domino apostolico, qui te direxit, teque magnopere commendamus, qui nulla in re defuisti. que hic gesta sunt, tuum erit apostolice pietati referre atque hortari, ut que suo incumbunt officio expleat, in altero concilio legatum habeat. opus hoc sanctissimum, quod fruenti animo inchoavit, ferventiori studio prosequatur. hac inclita natio Germanica, que ceteris in rebus apostolico culmini devotissima est, in hoc certe negotio fidei sue sanctitati obsequentissimam se prebebit.

[4] tu quoque, Casimiri serenissimi regis Polonie ac magni Lituaniae ducis orator, regem tuum super {562} his, que gesta hic sunt et que gerenda superant, certiolem efficias, cujus mentem ad commune bonum paratam libenter audivimus ejusque propositum cesaree sublimitati non sine debita commendatione referemus. prestat autem ipse facto, quod verbo promittit; assurgat totis viribus, quando sua potissimum interest, dum Turchi bello premuntur; in Grecia prelium cum Tartaris, in Moldavia sive in Valachia miscere, ne alteri alteris auxilio esse possint. sic enim disjuncte due validissime gentes facilius opprimuntur. deserat rex tuus Prutenicum bellum, quod Christianis noxium est, atque ad infideles arma sua convertat, unde possit et laudem mereri et fructum capere.

[5] similiter et vos, clarissimi ac potentis Sabaudie ducis oratores, domum redeuntes, que vidistis et audivistis domino vestro nota efficietis curabitisque, ut ad futurum concilium legatos de sua mente instructos mittat, ut qui nunc dicti cesaris parens fuit, tum quoque fidelem principem et imperatori obsequentem se exhibeat.

[6] idem vos ceteri, qui adestis, sive principum sive civitatum vices agentes, erga eos, qui vos miserunt, efficietis, ut quod bene ceptum est opus, ad honorem divini nominis salutemque Christiani populi et hujus inclite nationis decus atque imperii sacri gloriam optime consummari possit.

[3] And now I come to you, great father of the Church of Pavia,¹ whom the First See² has sent here as legate. Your presence has been a great boon, and your outstanding eloquence and wisdom has been of great help to the good conduct of the whole matter. We give immense thanks to His Apostolic Lordship,³ who sent you and we praise you highly for not failing in any way whatsoever. It will be your charge to relate to His Apostolic Piety what has been achieved here, to exhort him to fulfill the task laid on him,⁴ and to send a legate to the next diet. May he pursue with even greater energy the holy undertaking which he began with such enthusiasm. This illustrious German nation, in all other matters so devoted to His Apostolic Highness, will certainly prove completely obedient to His Holiness in this matter of the Faith.

[4] And you, ambassador of Casimir, Most Serene King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania,⁵ you will inform your king about what has been done here and what remains to do. We have heard with pleasure that his mind is focused on the common good, and we shall relate his position to His Imperial Highness with due commendation. May he himself now translate his words into actions. May he mobilize all his forces since it is in his own great interest that the Turks be opposed militarily, and that there be war with the Tartars both in Greece, in Moldavia, and in Wallachia, so that they cannot come to help each other. If they are attacked separately, these two strong peoples⁶ will be subdued more easily. Let your king abandon the war in Prussia⁷ which is harmful to the Christians, and turn his arms against the infidels. Thus he may acquire both glory and benefit.

[5] Similarly you, ambassadors of the noble and mighty Duke of Savoy,⁸ should return home and inform your lord about what you have seen and heard, and obtain that he sends legates informed about his intentions to the next diet, so that he who is the cousin⁹ of the said emperor, will also show himself to be a loyal prince, obedient to the emperor.

[6] And the same should all the rest of you who are here as representatives of your princes or cities do towards those who sent you, so that this venture which has begun so admirably will be accomplished well, to the honour of the divine name, to the salvation of Christian people, to the honour of this illustrious nation, and to the glory of the Holy Empire.

¹ Giovanni di Castiglione (ca. 1413 – 1460): Bishop of Pavia 1453. Cardinal 1456

² The Apostolic See, i.e. the Papacy

³ Nicolaus V [Tommaso Parentucelli] (1397-1455): Bishop of Bologna 1444, Cardinal 1446, Pope from 1447 to his death

⁴ I.e. to organize an Italian fleet to support the land army mobilized by the other European powers

⁵ Kasimir IV (Jagiellon) (1427-1492): King of Poland from 1447 to his death

⁶ I.e. the Turks and the Tartars

⁷ The war of the Prussian population, supported by the king, against the knightly German Order

⁸ Louis I (1413-1465): Duke of Savoy from 1440 to his death

⁹ "parens"